

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING AND PUBLIC COMMENT

The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), the Department of Mines Minerals and Energy (DMME) and the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) seek written and oral comments from interested persons on the draft Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Study for Straight Creek and tributaries; Stone Creek, Ely Creek, Puckett Creek, Lick Branch, Baileys Trace and Gin Creek in Lee County. These streams were identified on the 1998 303(d) Total Maximum Daily Load Priority List and Report as impaired due to violations of the State's water quality standards for the General Standard (benthic) and Bacteria.

The public meeting on the draft TMDL addressing the benthic and bacteria impairments will be held on **Thursday, February 10, 2005 at 7:00 p.m.** in the St. Charles Elementary School gymnasium. St. Charles Elementary School address is 1 Main Street in St. Charles, Virginia. [Note: Should the school be closed due to snow on February 10, the meeting will be rescheduled. The rescheduled date will be posted on the DEQ web site and on signs in the watershed.]

Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act and §62.1-44.19:7.C of the Code of Virginia require DEQ to develop TMDLs for pollutants responsible for each impaired water contained in Virginia's 303(d) TMDL Priority List and Report.

Straight Creek and its tributary streams are located in Lee County northwest of Pennington Gap, Virginia. The impairments include about 38 miles of streams in the Straight Creek watershed. Straight Creek flows through St. Charles. The entire length of Straight Creek from its headwaters to confluence with North Fork Powell River is included. Stone Creek follows Route 421 west towards the Kentucky/Virginia state line. The draft TMDL study identifies sediment and conductivity/total dissolved solids as the stressors for aquatic life problems. The draft study proposes reductions in sedimentation, conductivity/total dissolved solids and bacteria so that the stream can meet the water quality standards.

The public comment period for the draft report will end on **March 14, 2005**. After February 7, 2005, the draft study can be viewed or downloaded and printed from the DEQ website: <http://www.deq.virginia.gov/tmdl/homepage.html>. Address questions or information requests to Nancy T. Norton, P. E. Written comments should include the name, address, and telephone number of the person submitting the comments and should be sent to Nancy T. Norton, P. E., Department of Environmental Quality, P. O. Box 1688, Abingdon, Virginia 24212-1688, telephone (276) 676-4807, fax (276) 676-4899, or e-mail ntnorton@deq.virginia.gov.